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Before bringing before the Executive Council the resolution proposed yesterday by the Finance Committee, which resolution involves the serious question whether the practice of many years past is to be now suddenly changed, I wish that the Finance Committee, as I am afraid that the resolution is far from expressing the views of the majority of the Members. I request the Finance Committee therefore to meet again on Tuesday next, the 28th instant, at 4 p.m., when I trust that all the Members will find it convenient to attend, and will consider the proposition made by the Honorable A. P. McEwen or any other that may be made in lieu thereof.—Government House, Hongkong, 16th July, 1886.

On the Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 15th instant, are read and confirmed. (1) Read the following Despatches in connection with the first formation in this Colony of the Finance Committee:—

O. O. Despatch, No. 5, of 8th January, 1870.

Governor's Despatch, No. 98, of 1st August, 1872.

O. O. Despatch, No. 145, of 8th October, 1872.

Read also extract from Governor's Speech of 19th October, 1878, and extract from Secretary of State's Despatch, No. 42, of 8th May, 1879.

Read also the following Minute by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government:—

W. H. MAHER.

I think that the Honorable Member who made this statement in the Finance Committee on the 15th instant, that its meetings should be held with open doors, has mistaken the object of the Finance Committee.

2. The object of the Finance Committee, as also of the Committee of Laws and of Public Works, is as stated in the opening Speech of Sir George Bowen, in the first instance, the details of every proposed vote and measure. It is with the view of saving much valuable time in Council that these Committees were appointed here, as in other Crown Colonies. They perform precisely the same functions that Board Committees do for Banks and Public Companies, and are, as far as my knowledge extends, never held in public. In Mr. McEwen's system has worked admirably for our thirty years, and the meetings are never held in open doors.

3. In one point, however, the practice in Mauritius differs from that of Hongkong, and I have long thought that the Mauritius practice might be introduced here. The draft minutes of the Finance Committee are there either circulated for revision by the different members, or, in important cases, are read in public. The minutes are then read at the next meeting of Council, and on the motion for their adoption, any Member may discuss them, and they may be rejected, as I have seen done in Mauritius.

4. One very important reason why the Finance Committee should be held in public is that the Government would be wholly precluded in that case from communicating information of a confidential nature. As a rule, most of the Secretary of State's Despatches containing instructions can be communicated, when necessary, confidentially to the Government, and although the Governor cannot publish them by laying them before a meeting when reporters are present (See Col. Rule 188).

5. Sir John Pope Hennessy informed the Council in 1878 that he was considering whether or not he should allow reporters to be present at future meetings of the Finance Committee, but the Secretary of State, to whom he referred the question, thought it undesirable that the practice of the Finance Committee should be altered.

6. It must be evident to Honorable Members that, if Sir John Pope Hennessy did not feel justified in making an innovation of this kind, without previously asking for the sanction of the Secretary of State, I cannot take upon myself that responsibility, especially when the Secretary of State did not approve of the recommendation of Sir John Pope Hennessy. There is therefore no advantage to be gained by conveying a question of this kind to the Legislative Council, since the resolution, if passed, must be referred home. The motion can be made, if the Honorable Members still think it desirable, at the next meeting of Council, which must be held in the early part of September, if not before to discuss the Estimates, and if carried, will forward it to the Secretary of State at once.

7. If the public are to be admitted to meetings of the Finance Committee, the view of the Council of such Committees seems to me to disappear, and all votes for money might as well be discussed in Council, without the preliminary examination of details, which has hitherto proved so convenient both in this and in other Crown Colonies.

8. I cannot help thinking that the Honorable Member who proposed this resolution must have been under the impression, at the time, that the functions of the Finance Committee were more important and more conclusive than they really are.

9. I assure Honorable Members that it is my wish that the fullest information should be given by the Government in all matters connected with the expenditure of public money, and that I shall at all times be ready to entertain any suggestions that are of undoubted advantage, and that I feel that I am authorized in according to Government House, Hongkong, 17th July, 1886.

Considerable discussion ensued, when the Acting Attorney General proposed and Mr. McEwen seconded, the following resolution:—

"That this Committee, having heard read certain Despatches and the explanations of the O. O. Minister, withdraw the resolution of the 15th inst., and resolve that the Meetings of the Finance Committee be carried on as heretofore, until the question of admitting the public to the meetings be considered at the first meeting of the Legislative Council."

Carried unanimously.

Hon. A. P. McEwen, speaking with reference to a vote of £50 to Mr. Hillier proposed by the Finance Committee, said the Colonial Secretary would recall that he made a few remarks on the subject in Committee. He wished in the Council now or on a future occasion to bring forward a resolution on the subject.

His Excellency—You must give notice of resolution.

Hon. Mr. McEwen—I beg to give notice for next meeting of Council.

THE LAW COMMITTEE.

Hon. Mr. McEwen asked, How many sittings of the Law Committee have taken place since the Committee was formed in 1883?

The Acting Attorney General said—in answer to that I beg to state as follows:—I have been informed that Mr. O'Malley called the Law Committee together on four occasions, which I would call four formal meetings, but besides these there were several informal meetings. At these meetings the Clerk of the Council was not present, and he did not attend. There have

therefore been no minutes or records of these informal meetings kept. It is impossible now to say how many of these informal meetings were held. Since I have been Acting Attorney General I have not called the committee together. Besides the ordinance I introduced, which had passed the Law Revision Committee, the principal measures introduced by me have been: Bills of Sales Ordinance, and the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and the Reformatory Schools Ordinance. I was of opinion that there was nothing in these ordinances which required them to be discussed in the Law Committee, before being considered in Committee of the whole Council, and therefore I have not called meetings of the Law Committee.

Hon. Mr. Ryrie—Have you any record of these four meetings? Who were present and who were not?

Hon. Mr. Sassoon said that during Mr. O'Malley's time he had been very often invited, and nearly all the bills brought forward in the Council were discussed in the Law Committee.

Hon. Mr. Ryrie—I do not remember of them. Who were present? I was not.

Hon. Mr. Sassoon—I was present; almost everyone was present.

Hon. Mr. McEwen then asked, "How many sittings of the Public Works Committee have taken place since the Committee was formed in 1883?"

Hon. Mr. Price—They have met five times, and in connection with this question it ought to be mentioned that the whole of the members of the Public Works Committee are members also of the Finance Committee, and also that all questions connected with projects of public works, involving the expenditure of money, are as a rule so carefully inquired into and thrashed out in the Finance Committee that really the Public Works Committee have taken place the smaller one to do. That is the reason for the few occasions on which the Public Works Committee have met.

Hon. Mr. Ryrie wished to ask a question with regard to the Law Committee. He said that the names of those present at the four meetings of the Finance Committee, which he had turned out that Mr. Ryrie himself had been present at one and absent at the other three.

Hon. Mr. Ryrie said there were no notices sent.

Hon. Mr. Liater said he always received them with the greatest regularity, and he had no doubt Mr. Ryrie must have received them too.

Hon. Mr. Sassoon also declared that he duly received the notices.

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Hon. Mr. McEwen moved—"That in future all matters of Public interest, and more particularly the voting of Public funds, be discussed openly in Council, and not, as heretofore, in private meetings of the Finance Committee."

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A full discussion took place when the absent members were present, and I am bound to say the result was pretty much the same as before. My hon. friend Mr. Keewick before the left the Colony stated distinctly that he was in favour of motions being discussed in public, and also on votes for large sums of money, but he also stated that he would be sorry to see the Finance Committee done away with. Now, Sir, to point my argument, we have heard it stated frequently in this Colony by the best legal authorities, namely by the Attorney General and the Queen's Counsel who is at present absent, that these secret meetings were unconstitutional and against the Charter and Instructions of the Colony; and that has never been contradicted. I endeavoured to get the legal members of the present Finance Committee to give an expression of opinion, but beyond dealing in vague generalities I could get nothing definite out of them. I have been told on very good official authority that one reason why these meetings are held in private and matters of interest to this Colony are not discussed in public, is that if they were, it would give certain members of this Council an opportunity of talking to the press. Now I state, as I stated in Finance Committee, that if that is the only thing the Government have to hang their argument on, that it is a rotten one and ought to be given up. I don't believe the Secretary of State would permit such an idea to prevail. I have also been told that in this I am merely advancing the views of the press. Well now, with regard to the agitators, if the Government are under the impression that the discontent and dissatisfaction prevailing for many years past have been confined to two or three people, I am of opinion that the dissatisfaction has been spread throughout the Colony. Well now, with regard to the agitators, if the Government are under the impression that the discontent and dissatisfaction prevailing for many years past have been confined to two or three people, I am of opinion that the dissatisfaction has been spread throughout the Colony.

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Intimations.

NOTICE.

THE *Wah Tsai Yee* has been established in connection with the *China Mail* over ten years ago. The Business has hitherto been leased to Chinese. Since 1881 it has been leased to Mr. TAM YIK KUI, and the Lease will expire on the 1st of SEPTEMBER of this year; after which the *China Mail* will take over the Business, and Lease it to Mr. HO CHUNG SHANG, under the same Conditions as heretofore, but the Staff will be new. A learned and famous Scholar has specially been engaged to take the position of Editor, and new arrangements will be made to ensure a great improvement upon what the paper was before.

GENTLEMEN who have for years been subscribing to this paper may rest assured that the paper will come to them without interruption and need make no change in regard to it. Referring to the Accounts with this Office for the insertion of Notices, and for Subscriptions to the Paper, &c., all Debts due to him up to the 1st of SEPTEMBER will be collected by the Old Lessee Mr. TAM YIK KUI, and after the 1st of SEPTEMBER, they will be collected by the New Lessee Mr. HO CHUNG SHANG. This is the usual practice in such cases, and Subscribers are earnestly requested to take the necessary note of the Change of Lessee so as to avoid any mistake in payment. There has hitherto been only one *Wah Tsai Yee*, the Office of which is situated at No. 3, Wyndham Street, and it has no Branch Office in any other place. On the 17th of June, Mr. TAM YIK KUI issued a Notice in an Extra saying: "The Lease of this Office will soon expire, and a good day will be chosen to remove to some other place, and when this Business is opened in the new house, the name will be changed, and it will be styled *Wah Tsai Yee*, &c., &c." This statement is ambiguous, but it is evident that the intention is to imitate the name of this office, and indeed thereby it may easily mislead the readers. Now as Mr. TAM YIK KUI is a Lessee, he may say that the terms of his lease has expired, but it is impossible for him to say the lease of this office will soon expire, for the true owner of Mr. TAM YIK KUI's statement would be: "The Lease of the House occupied by this Office will soon expire, and consequently, it will be removed to another house. And besides, he says 'the name of this Office will be changed, and it will be styled *Wah Tsai Yee*, &c., &c.' From this statement it is evident that it is not the name of the office that is to be changed, but the name of the house. It seems like an attempt to pass off a fish's eye for a pearl.

Now to tell the truth, the *Wah Tsai Yee* is a new Establishment of Mr. TAM YIK KUI, and has no connection whatever with the *Wah Tsai Yee* of old; and heretofore Mr. TAM YIK KUI has nothing to do with this Office at all, and Gentlemen are requested to distinguish this Office from his Establishment.

The types of this Office have been in use for some years, and it is now arranged that when the Management of the Business is handed over to the New Lessee, New Type will be supplied and will be ready in a short time. The New Editor of this Paper has already elsewhere given great satisfaction in a similar position to all concerned; and as New Types will be used, the Paper will be more than ever legible. It is hoped that Subscribers will kindly keep up their subscriptions, and that Scholars and Merchants will all kindly put their Notices in the paper. This Office under its New Management looks to them for their Patronage and Support; and in Order to secure the same this statement is published.

HO CHUNG SHANG,
New Lessee,
Chinese Mail.

NOTICE.

IN connection with the above Statement, I beg to inform the Supporters of the *China Mail* and the Public generally that I have leased that Newspaper to Mr. HO CHUNG SHANG, from the 1st of SEPTEMBER NEXT; and that the Lease of Business now held by Mr. TAM YIK KUI expires on the 31st AUGUST PROXIMO.

GEO. MURRAY BAIN,
Proprietor,
China Mail Office,
Hongkong, July 31, 1886.

SAILOR'S HOME.

ANY Cast-off CLOTHING, BOOKS, or PAPERS will be thankfully received at the SAILOR'S HOME, West Point.
Hongkong, July 25, 1878.

WASHING BOOKS.

WASHERMAN'S BOOKS, for the use of Ladies and Gentlemen, can now be had at this Office.—Price, \$1 each.
CHINA MAIL OFFICE.

Mails.

Occidental & Oriental Steam-Ship Company.

TAKING CARGO AND PASSENGERS TO JAPAN, THE UNITED STATES, MEXICO, CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA, AND EUROPE, VIA THE OVERLAND RAILWAYS, AND ATLANTIC & OTHER CONNECTING STEAMERS.

THE Steamship *RELIGIO* will be despatched for San Francisco, via Yokohama, on TUESDAY, 14th September, at 3 p.m.
Connection being made at Yokohama, with Steamers from Shanghai and Japan Ports.

All Parcel Packages should be marked to address in full; and same will be received at the Company's Office, until 5 p.m. the day previous to sailing.
Return Passengers, who have paid full fare, and who have not returned for China or Japan (or vice versa) within six months, will be allowed a discount of 20% from Return Fare; if re-embarking within one year, an allowance of 10% will be made from Return Fare. Pre-Paid Return Passage Orders, available for one year, will be issued at a Discount of 25% from Return Fare. These allowances do not apply to through fares from China and Japan to Europe.

Consular Invoices to accompany Cargo destined to ports beyond San Francisco, should be sent to the Company's Office, addressed to the Collector of Customs, San Francisco.

For further information as to Freight or Passage, apply to the Agency of the Company, No. 50A, Queen's Road Central.
C. D. HARMAN,
Agent.
Hongkong, August 24, 1886.

Mails.

NOTICE.

COMPAGNIE DES MESSAGERIES MARITIMES.

PAQUEBOTS POSTE FRANCAIS.

STEAM FOR SAIGON, SINGAPORE, BATAVIA, COLOMBO, PONDICHERRY, MADRAS, CALCUTTA, ADEN, SUEZ, PORT SAID, MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA PORTS.

MARSEILLES, AND PORTS OF BRAZIL, AND LA PLATA; ALSO BORDEAUX, LE HAVRE, DUNKIRK, LONDON AND ANTWERP.

ON THURSDAY, the 2nd September, 1886, at Noon, the Company's S.S. *IRAOUADY*, Commandant BIZET, with MAILS, PASSENGERS, SPECIE, and CARGO, will leave this Port for the above places.

Cargo and Specie will be registered for London, and parcels sent on to Europe, accepted in transit through Marseilles for the principal places of Europe.

Shipping Orders will be granted until Noon.

Cargo will be received on board until 4 p.m. Specie and Parcels until 3 p.m. on the 1st September, 1886. (Parcels are not to be sent on board; they must be left at the Agency's Office.)

Contents and value of Packages are required.

For further particulars, apply at the Company's Office.
G. DE CHAMPEAUX,
Agent.
Hongkong, August 20, 1886.

U. S. MAIL LINE.

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

THROUGH TO NEW YORK, VIA OVERLAND RAILWAYS, AND THROUGH AT YOKOHAMA, AND SAN FRANCISCO.

THE U. S. Mail Steamship *CITY OF NEW YORK* will be despatched for San Francisco, via Yokohama, on THURSDAY, the 2nd September, at 3 p.m., taking Passengers and Freight for Japan, the United States, and Europe.

Through Bills of Lading issued for transportation to Yokohama and other Japan Ports, to San Francisco, to Atlantic and Indian Cities of the United States, via Overland Railways to Havana, Trinidad, and Guaymas, and to ports in Mexico, Central and South America, by the Company's and connecting Steamers.

Through Passage Tickets granted to England, France, and Germany by all trans-Atlantic lines of Steamers.

Passengers, who have paid full fare, re-embarking at San Francisco for China or Japan (or vice versa) within six months, will be allowed a discount of 20% from Return Fare; if re-embarking within one year, an allowance of 10% will be made from Return Fare. Pre-Paid Return Passage Orders, available for one year, will be issued at a Discount of 25% from Return Fare. These allowances do not apply to through fares from China and Japan to Europe.

Freight will be received on board until 4 p.m. the day previous to sailing. Parcel Packages will be received at the office until 5 p.m. same day; all Parcel Packages should be marked to address in full; value of same is required.

Consular Invoices to accompany Cargo destined to ports beyond San Francisco, should be sent to the Company's Office in San Francisco, addressed to the Collector of Customs at San Francisco.

For further information as to Passage and Freight, apply to the Agency of the Company, No. 50A, Queen's Road Central.
C. D. HARMAN,
Agent.
Hongkong, August 10, 1886.

NORDEUTSCHER LLOYD.

STEAM FOR SINGAPORE, COLOMBO, ADEN, SUEZ, PORT SAID, TRIESTE, BRINDISI.

ANTWERP, BREMEN & HAMBURG. PORTS IN THE LEVANTE, BLACK SEA & BALTIC PORTS; ALSO LONDON, NEW YORK, BOSTON, BALTIMORE, NEW ORLEANS, GALVESTON & SOUTH AMERICAN PORTS.

THE COMPANY'S STEAMERS WILL CALL AT SOUTHAMPTON TO LAND PASSENGERS AND LUGGAGE.

N.B.—Cargo can be taken on through Bills of Lading for the principal places in RUSSIA.

ON FRIDAY, the 3rd day of September, 1886, at Noon, the Company's Steamship *OPPEL*, Captain F. FERNER, with MAILS, PASSENGERS, SPECIE, and CARGO will leave this port as above.

Shipping Orders will be granted till Noon. Cargo will be received on board until 4 p.m. Specie and Parcels until 3 p.m. on the 2nd September, 1886. (Parcels are not to be sent on board; they must be left at Agency's Office.) Contents and Value of Packages are required.

The Company is prepared to GRANT POLICIES OF INSURANCE on TREASURE and CARGO shipped by their own Steamers.

For further Particulars, apply to
MEICHERS & Co.,
Agents.
Hongkong, August 2, 1886.

SUMMER TIME TABLE.

THE KOWLOON FERRY.

STEAM LAUNCH MORNING STAR.

Runs DAILY as a Ferry Boat between Peddar's Wharf and Tsai-Tai-Tai at the following hours:—This Time Table will take effect from the 10th APRIL, 1886.

WEEK DAYS. SUNDAYS.

Leave Peddar's Wharf	Leave Tsai-Tai-Tai	Arrive Peddar's Wharf	Arrive Tsai-Tai-Tai
6.00 a.m.	7.00 a.m.	6.00 a.m.	7.00 a.m.
8.00 " "	9.00 " "	8.00 " "	9.00 " "
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12.00 p.m.	1.00 p.m.	12.00 p.m.	1.00 p.m.
2.00 " "	3.00 " "	2.00 " "	3.00 " "
4.00 " "	5.00 " "	4.00 " "	5.00 " "
6.00 " "	7.00 " "	6.00 " "	7.00 " "
8.00 " "	9.00 " "	8.00 " "	9.00 " "
10.00 " "	11.00 " "	10.00 " "	11.00 " "
12.00 p.m.	1.00 p.m.	12.00 p.m.	1.00 p.m.
2.00 " "	3.00 " "	2.00 " "	3.00 " "
4.00 " "	5.00 " "	4.00 " "	